

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----181412 094576 /45

R 190900Z FEB 77
FM AMCONSUL TURIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0678
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L TURIN 0084

EXDIS

EUR/WE FOR AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE GARDNER

E.O. 11652: XGDS 3, DECLAS 12/31/90

TAGS: PINT, CVIS, IT

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH FIAT PRESIDENT GIOVANNI AGNELLI

1. SUMMARY: AGNELLI FORESAW GRANTING OF IMF LOAN TO ITALY
SHORTLY, HAD HIGH PRAISE FOR NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND
CURRENT EFFORT IN MIDDLE EAST, EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT AS TO WHERE
PSI REALLY STANDS, AND VERY MUCH IN FAVOR OF EASING U.S.
VISA POLICY RE PCI. HE ALSO PESSIMISTIC RE PUBLIC ORDER
AND SECURITY IN ITALY TODAY AND ONE SENSES THIS IS FOREMOST
ITALIAN ISSUE CURRENTLY IN HIS MIND. AGNELLI'S ARRIVE NEW
YORK O/A FEB. 22/23 FOR WEEK'S STAY. END SUMMARY.

2. AGNELLI'S HAD US OVER FOR FAMILY DINNER FEB. 14 WITH
ONLY OTHER GUEST BETTINA GABETTI, AMERICAN WIFE OF GIANLUIGI
GABETTI, HEAD OF IFI (FIAT'S FINANCIAL ARM) WHO WAS ABSENT
BECAUSE OF FLU. CONVERSATION RELAXED AND RANGED OVER
MANY SUBJECTS, ALTHOUGH AT END OF EVENING I RECALLED TO
MYSELF THAT NOT ONCE HAD WORD "FIAT" BEEN USED NOR DID
ANY OF US TOUCH ON THIS PARTICULAR ASPECT OF AGNELLI'S
INTERESTS. OF POSSIBLE PARTICULAR INTEREST GIVEN ARRIVAL
OF BOTH AGNELLI'S IN NEW YORK O/A FEB. 22/23 FOR STAY OF A
WEEK WERE FOLLOWING:

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A. AGNELLI CATEGORICALLY STATED IMF LOAN TO ITALY
WOULD BE GRANTED SHORTLY AND HE FORESAW NO PROBLEMS.

B. HE VOLUNTEERED SECRETARY'S MIDDLE EAST TRIP
WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT AND HE WAS VERY PLEASED TO SEE THIS
INITIATIVE UNDERTAKEN SO EARLY IN PRESIDENT'S ADMINISTRATION.

C. AS FOR NEW ADMINISTRATION, AGNELLI WAS VERY HIGH ON PRESIDENT'S MANNER OF WORKING, HIS MEMORY, HIS METHODS AND HIS SENSE OF ORGANIZATION. HE WAS QUITE TAKEN WITH RADIO PHONE-IN TO PRESIDENT ON MARCH 5. AGNELLI SAID HE HAD MET AMBASSADOR YOUNG AND WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH HIS "PARLIAMENTARY" APPROACH TO UN AFFAIRS, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS VOTES FROM AFRICAN COUNTRIES. AGNELLI, WHO HAD SPENT MOST OF JAN. 20 WITH ADMIRAL TURNER IN TURIN, WAS SURPRISED AND PLEASED WITH SUBSEQUENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF TURNER'S DESIGNATION TO HEAD CIA.

D. WHEN MRS. GABETTI MOVED TO SPECULATE RE POSSIBLE DELAY IN GARDNER'S ARRIVAL IN ROME, AGNELLI QUICKLY EXPLAINED ROUTINE OF BUREAUCRATIC STEPS NECESSARY AND HIS BELIEF THAT AMBASSADOR WOULD BE IN ROME END OF MARCH.

E. AS PSI SEARCHES FOR "AUTONOMOUS SPACE" BETWEEN DC AND PCI, AGNELLI SAID HIS MAIN PROBLEM WITH PSI WAS KNOWING REALLY WHERE IT STOOD. HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW PSI SEC. GEN. CRAXI WELL, BUT HOPED TO HAVE A MEETING WITH HIM WEEK OF FEB. 14 IN ORDER TO GET TO KNOW HIM BETTER. AGNELLI CHARACTERIZED DE MARTINO AND MANCINI AS LEADERS WHOSE TIME HAS NOW PASSED AND CRAXI, ALDO ANIASI, FRANCO FROIO AND CLAUDIO SIGNORILE HAVE MOVED TO FOREFRONT; AGNELLI CONSIDERED ENRICO MANCA LESS TRUSTWORTHY THAN OTHER NEW PSI LEADERS. ALL THAT AGNELLI HAD HEARD ABOUT CRAXI LED HIM TO BELIEVE CRAXI WAS "HIS OWN MAN" AND "OK". IN GENERAL, AGNELLI DID NOT BELIEVE PSI EFFORTS TO MOVE CONFIDENTIAL

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SOME PCI MEMBERS TO THE RIGHT WOULD HAVE MUCH SUCCESS.

F. AGNELLI NOTED RECENT WASH. POST EDIT ON EASING OF U.S. VISA POLICY AND SAID HE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT. HIS REASONING WAS THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE MORE PCI VISITORS TO U.S. SO THAT MORE AMERICANS COULD HEAR WHAT PCI OFFICIALS SAY IN AMERICA AND THEN COMPARE THAT WITH WHAT THEY SAY IN ITALY. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "MYTH AND REALITY" WOULD THEN BE CLEAR, HE SAID, TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE PCI.

G. BOTH AGNELLI'S SEPARATELY COMMENTED ON CURRENT UNIVERSITY AGITATION, PUT MUCH OF THE BLAME ON GOI AND Malfatti AND NOT ON STUDENTS WHO ARE "MORE MATURE NOW THAN IN 1968." NEITHER AGNELLI BELIEVED ITALY WAS HEADING FOR REPETITION OF 1968 STUDENT SITUATION.

H. AGNELLI SAID HIS MAIN CONCERN OVER ITALY NOW WAS ISSUE OF PUBLIC ORDER. HE BELIEVES IT IS EXTREMELY

DIFFICULT FOR GOI TO GET POLITICAL HANDLE ON THIS ISSUE
AND ACT FROM POSITION OF STRENGTH. HE EXPRESSED AN ALMOST
RESIGNED SENSE OF PESSIMISM AND ONE SENSED IN HIS MIND THIS
WAS "ISSUE NO. 1" WHEN COMPARED TO ECONOMIC ISSUES,
POLITICAL COMPROMISES OR EVEN FIAT.

3. COMMENT. THIS WAS MY FIRST SEMI-PRIVATE MEETING WITH
AGNELLI AFTER THREE MORE PUBLIC MEETINGS. HE WAS WARM,
OPEN AND HELPFUL. LATER IN THE EVENING HE LOOKED SOMEWHAT
PHYSICALLY TIRED; HE MAY HAVE BEEN UNDER MORE THAN USUAL
WORK PRESSURE WITH BOTH GABETTI AND FIAT/AGNELLI FAMILY
NOTAIO REMO MORONE ILL (LATTER IN FOR MAJOR SURGERY IN
LYON), AND WITH FIAT/UNION NEGOTIATIONS KICKING OFF FEB. 15.
MY MAIN PURPOSE WAS FOR US TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER
BETTER AND THUS OUR CONVERSATION RANGED ALL OVER THE LOT AS
OPPOSED TO DISCUSSION IN DEPTH OF
ANY PARTICULAR ISSUE. FULL MEMCON TO MILAN FEB. 18 FOR
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ONWARD POUCHING. WRIGHT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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TAGS: PINT, CVIS, IT, FIAT, IMF, (AGNELLI, GIOVANNI)
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